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Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and of the twenty-fifth special session of the General Assembly

Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Governments have continued to increase their support to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation and to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund, set up within the framework of the Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian people. The United Nations Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Global Urban Observatory has been strengthened as a worldwide monitoring and learning network, in response to demand-based national and local initiatives, in order to assist countries and cities in collecting, analysing and using urban indicators and statistical data. In its shelter and sustainable human settlements development, disaster mitigation and rehabilitation activities, UN-Habitat has continued to strengthen its cooperation and collaboration within the United Nations system, with women, young people, local authorities and all other Habitat Agenda partners.

The activities of UN-Habitat and the World Bank in the Cities Alliance have significantly contributed to improved collaboration between the two organizations and other Alliance members and have also placed the issue of urban poverty and slums on the international agenda. Although a number of Governments have included shelter and urbanization issues in their national development strategies, the link between sustainable urbanization policies and poverty reduction strategies remains to be clarified and strengthened in many developing countries. The report concludes with a set of recommendations.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/226 of 23 December 2003, entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)".

II. Progress made in the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

A. Funding

2. On the whole, Governments have responded quite positively to calls for increased contributions during the 2002-2003 biennium. General-purpose funds from Governments rose from US$ 6 million in 2002 to US$ 8.3 million in 2003, while special-purpose contributions from Governments and other donors increased from US$ 30 million in 2002 to US$ 37.8 million in 2003. The main concern is that special-purpose contributions remain at a considerably higher level than general-purpose contributions, making it difficult for UN-Habitat to plan its financial commitments and implement its work programme around strategically focused goals.

3. Since 60 per cent of the general-purpose contributions come from four countries, a vigorous campaign has been launched to widen the donor base. The Executive Director appealed to member States for multi-year funding, to enable more effective support of programme implementation. There are promising signs, with commitments of $Can 15 million from Canada and NKr 10 million from Norway towards the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund to support developing countries in achieving goal 7 (targets 10 and 11) of the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, UN-Habitat and the Asian Development Bank in March 2003 signed a memorandum of understanding under which they will provide US$ 10 million in capacity-building grants to Asian cities, to be followed by US$ 500 million in loans for pro-poor investments in water and sanitation through the Water for Asian Cities Programme. UN-Habitat is also developing the slum upgrading facility as an innovative way of raising funds for upgrading slums and for other human settlements activities while also strengthening the Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation.

4. In its resolution 2003/62 of 25 July 2003, the Economic and Social Council welcomed resolution 19/18 of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat,[1] in which the Governing Council endorsed the establishment of the Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian people and the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund of US$ 5 million for an initial period of two years. The Council also urged the international donor community and all financial institutions to support UN-Habitat in the immediate mobilization of financial resources for the establishment and operation of the Programme and the Fund. The Programme Coordinator assumed his duties on 1 March 2004 and began the implementation of the Programme with a programme definition phase (March 2004 to December 2004), which involves consultations with the Palestinian Authority, bilateral donors and inter-agency

consultations, fund-raising for the Fund, assessment of existing conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory and formulation of programme elements. Steps are being taken to appoint a chief technical adviser in Jerusalem and a UN-Habitat programme manager in Gaza to assist the Coordinator in implementing the Programme. To date, contributions to the fund have been made by the United States of America (US$ 500,000) and Sweden (US$ 275,000).

5. As an interim step, and in an effort to further strengthen and improve the delivery of necessary services by the United Nations Office at Nairobi, 17 new regular budgetary posts (6 Professional and 11 Local level) were requested by the Secretary-General and subsequently approved by the General Assembly. Similarly, two new regular budgetary posts have been approved for UN-Habitat.

B. Monitoring and evaluation

6. UN-Habitat continues to provide substantive support to Governments as they establish local, national and regional urban observatories to support the development of urban policy. For that purpose, the UN-Habitat Global Urban Observatory (GUO) has been strengthened as a worldwide monitoring and learning network, with staff able to respond to demand-based national and local initiatives, in order to assist countries and cities in collecting, analysing and using urban indicators and statistical data. Activities include the building of local capacities for the use of urban indicators data and geographic information systems (GIS) technology for city planning, city management, policy-making and participatory governance.

7. Strategic partnerships for monitoring and evaluation have been developed in order to sustain this approach, internally with the Urban Management Programme, Sustainable Cities Programme and the water for African and Asian cities programmes and externally, with the Cities Alliance, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

8. UN-Habitat is providing technical assistance to Governments on three main fronts:

(a) The Global Urban Observatory is supporting local authorities and stakeholders in undertaking urban inequities surveys and collecting urban indicators according to a global sample of cities (a set of 350 cities in the world). These standard surveys are expanded to cover any special topics of interest to the community (HIV/AIDS, domestic violence etc);

(b) Technical cooperation projects are being implemented by UN-Habitat and partners (UNDP, World Bank, Department for International Development (DFID), Cities Alliance and other multilateral and bilateral agencies). The aim is to promote the development of city performance monitoring systems (based on a mix of global and local indicators) as a foundation for city consultations, municipal reform and international donor investment programmes;

(c) Where cities and national stakeholders formulate a specific request to establish or strengthen urban observatories and local monitoring systems. Efforts are geared towards developing and implementing indicators systems for monitoring the Habitat Agenda,[2] the Millennium Development Goals and national and local development targets.

9. The expected outputs include functional national and local urban observatories, establishment of urban monitoring systems and information-based planning processes in selected cities and countries. These activities are being undertaken in conjunction with USAID household surveys (e.g., Addis Ababa, Istanbul), the ongoing urban projects of various donors (e.g., DFID India, UNDP Indonesia) and in response to requests for assistance from non-governmental organizations and local authorities (e.g., member cities of the International Metropolis project).

10. Good progress has been made in establishing joint initiatives with ongoing urban projects in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Latvia, Mexico, South Africa and Yemen. The current portfolio consists of joint projects with UNDP, the World Bank, the Cities Alliance, DFID and the Metropolis project. Further, following the circulation of information on GUO local indicator activities within the World Bank, a number of requests for assistance were received from its regional offices in relation to the Bank's projects (China, El Salvador, Georgia, Malawi, Mexico, Peru, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen).

11. Moreover, UN-Habitat has begun to develop a set of products that will assist local partners to develop their own performance monitoring systems, as recommended in the Habitat Agenda. Operational guidelines for municipal performance measurement have been produced jointly by UN-Habitat and the World Bank. GUO is a partner of the World Bank in China and the UN-Habitat regional office for Asia and the Pacific in the development of training resources for a distance-learning course.

12. In an effort to advance the progress of monitoring the achievement of a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020 (target 11 of Millennium Development Goal 7), UN-Habitat, in close collaboration with the Statistics Division of the United Nations Secretariat and the Cities Alliance, organized a gathering of experts and other stakeholders from around the globe to define the concept of slums and to identify related indicators. Subsequent indicator estimates for 2001 constituted the baseline for future estimates of slum-dwellers at the country level. These estimates have already served their global monitoring purpose, having been published in the UNDP *Human Development Report 2003: Millennium Development Goals — A Compact among Nations to End Human Poverty*[3] and the 2003 report of the Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals. They were also published in the 2003 edition of the UN-Habitat flagship report, *The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements*,[4] which examines the social, spatial and economic factors at all levels, from local to global, that underlie the formation and dynamics of slums.

13. Recently, a more elaborate UN-Habitat report, concerning the country-by-country distribution of slum-dwellers and its relation to the Human Development Index, entitled "Slums of the world", was published as a working paper. The report is expected to improve the coverage of country reports on the Millennium Development Goals, most of which do not deal with target 11. Moreover, in order to enable a better understanding of global slum trends and patterns for monitoring purposes, UN-Habitat has produced baseline data for 1990, using the same methodology.

14. UN-Habitat has recently introduced a programme on the monitoring of urban inequities. The main purpose of the programme is to monitor better the conditions of

the urban poor in relation to other urban residents. The overarching global goal of the programme is to influence the urban policies of Governments by providing knowledge support.

15. Another important initiative has been the initiation of an ongoing dialogue on what is entailed in the improvement of slum-dwellers' conditions. UN-Habitat, in close collaboration with the Millennium Project task force on improving the lives of slum-dwellers (Task Force 8), has organized meetings and consultations to advance the conceptual understanding of slum upgrading, including the means to measure it. As a result, consensus is reached on the scope of improvement, which includes not only the physical but also the socio-economic aspect of slum life. Based on this work, UN-Habitat is also conducting a preliminary study on costing the Millennium target, taking into account the different variables.

C. Partnerships

16. UN-Habitat has established a Partners and Youth Section to provide an integrated approach and promote cooperation with Habitat Agenda partners, including local authorities, parliamentarians, women, youth, academic community, civil society organizations and community-based organizations.

17. Over the past two years, UN-Habitat has strengthened its cooperation with non-governmental organizations within the framework of major groups and networks. While engagement with the private sector needs further strengthening, local authorities are extensively integrated in its work. The new rules of procedure, approved by the Governing Council of UN-Habitat in its resolution 19/1[1] have paved the way for enhanced engagement of local authorities in the Programme's activities. A 28-country study on the decentralization and strengthening of local authorities was carried out in 2003 as a follow-up to resolution 18/10 on the role of local authorities, adopted by the Governing Council at its eighteenth session.[1]

18. Since the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[5] the members of the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (ACLA) have held discussions and provided advice on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals at the city level. Their discussions took into consideration key issues, such as sustainable development, municipal international cooperation (city to city cooperation), urbanization and the definition of common policy positions for international events. In line with its work programme for the period 2004-2005, UN-Habitat endeavours to expand the work of ACLA and to associate the other organizations of the United Nations system which are also working with local authorities, with the activities of ACLA.

19. Cooperation and collaboration with non-governmental organizations and other Habitat Agenda partners centred on the implementation of the UN-Habitat global campaigns for security of tenure and good urban governance and on the global monitoring of urbanization trends. UN-Habitat worked closely with local authorities and their international associations during the reporting period. At the same time, technical collaboration with local authorities and their associations continued in the context of a number of UN-Habitat projects and global programmes. Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, one of its partners, held the Fourth Global Forum of Parliamentarians on Habitat in Berlin in 2003 and adopted the Berlin Declaration, which called upon Governments to increase their financial support for the

realization of the Millennium Development Goal of significantly improving the lives of 100 million slum-dwellers by the year 2020.

20. UN-Habitat worked closely with members of civil society around the world and financially supported the participation of members from the non-governmental organizations, civil society and youth organizations in the nineteenth session of the Governing Council. The forum of non-governmental organizations convened prior to the nineteenth session was attended by representatives of approximately 500 non-governmental organizations. The main aim of the forum was to promote and advocate the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and exchange experience and ideas with regard to shelter and housing development.

21. UN-Habitat is working towards increasing the number of women's organizations and women's affairs ministries working in the area of human settlement in order to meet the challenge of bringing human settlement issues into the mainstream agenda and 10-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing+10) process. To this end, UN-Habitat is working with 13 grass-roots women's organizations in East Africa to implement the women's empowerment programme, which focuses on housing development, land rights and the promotion and sale of East African handicrafts at the Universal Forum of Cultures, held in Barcelona, Spain, from 9 May to 26 September 2004. UN-Habitat also collaborated with the regional commissions and women's organizations involved in the preparations for Beijing+10.

22. A number of women's organizations in Asia participated effectively in the Asian regional expert group meeting on gender issues in human settlements and the award winning ceremony for the first Asian contest on gender-responsive local governments and women-friendly cities, held in March 2004. The women's organizations were also represented on the jury for the Asian contest and participated in the consultation on women's rights to adequate housing, organized in collaboration with the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, which was held in Mexico in January 2004. UN-Habitat has carried out studies on women's rights to land and property as part of a larger study in Latin America, the findings of which will be published in 2004.

23. Women's organizations continue to participate in the steering committees of the global campaigns on secure tenure and urban governance and the best practices programme. The local-to-local dialogue tool kit, prepared by the Huairou Commission on Women and Habitat with the support of UN-Habitat, will be published in 2004, and a workshop on engendering local governments will be convened during the second session of the World Urban Forum, to be held in Barcelona from 13 to 17 September 2004, to share experience among women's organizations and interested partners. The Huairou Commission and its networks will also hold various networking events during the second session of the Forum. Further, UN-Habitat worked in partnership with women's organizations to organize parallel events on gender, water and sanitation and women in human settlements in conjunction with the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in New York from 14 to 30 April 2004.

24. Overall, more resources are needed to support the activities undertaken by women's networks in the area of human settlements development.

25. UN-Habitat is cooperating with member States to address the issues facing young people:

(a) The Government of the Netherlands has provided support to the UN-Habitat work programme on youth in the areas of social crime prevention and sustainable livelihoods;

(b) The Government of Norway has supported the participation of young people from developing countries at sessions of the UN-Habitat Governing Council;

(c) The Government of Kenya has developed an integrated youth policy in Nairobi, which includes the establishment of a city-wide one-stop integrated youth development centre;

(d) The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania is developing an integrated youth policy at the local level, which includes the establishment of a city-wide youth council in Dar-es-Salaam;

(e) The Government of South Africa hosted an international conference on sustainable safety, which included an international youth meeting that was based on South Africa's good practices in regard to youth crime prevention and sustainable livelihoods;

(f) The Government of Mexico will be hosting an international conference on urban youth at risk in Monterrey in October 2004 to define a regional strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean.

26. UN-Habitat participated in a high-level panel on youth employment, held at the headquarters of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2003. Urban issues were included in the panel's recommendations. Together with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and ILO, UN-Habitat organized an expert group meeting on urban youth employment. The meeting, held in Nairobi in June 2004, followed up the recommendations of the high-level panel concerning the urban aspects of youth employment, which relate to Goal 7, target 11, of the Millennium Development Goals.

27. A draft regional strategy on urban youth at risk in Africa has been prepared and a draft strategy on enhancing the engagement of youth in UN-Habitat is under preparation. Consultations have been held with young people at various forums. Cooperation with local authorities has been strengthened in cities in which UN-Habitat has implemented programmes in order to add the component of capacity-building for youth employment and poverty alleviation. Capacity-building frameworks, or city-wide one-stop youth information resource centres, have been launched (e.g., in Kenya), facilitated by local authorities in partnership with the private sector and youth organizations.

28. The global partnership initiative on urban youth development in Africa is to be launched at the second session of the World Urban Forum. The initiative was spearheaded by city mayors in the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

29. UN-Habitat is also cooperating with various United Nations agencies in youth-related initiatives, as follows:

(a) The Department of Economic and Social Affairs cooperates with UN-Habitat in connection with its youth work programme, which included the preparation of the *World Youth Report 2003: The Global Situation of Young People*;[6]

(b) The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has signed a memorandum of understanding with UN-Habitat in regard to programmes targeting youth and crime prevention;

(c) The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is engaged with UN-Habitat in ongoing discussions on training manuals (e.g., the UNESCO manuals on growing up in cities and on urban youth crime prevention), with the possibility of launching a joint training programme;

(d) ILO is jointly involved with UN-Habitat in organizing an expert group meeting on urban youth employment, to be held in Nairobi in 2004;

(e) The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is engaged in the exchange of information and is collaborating in the development of a youth consultative mechanism, based on its experience in this area;

(f) The United Nations Children's Fund is collaborating with UN-Habitat in regard to the policy dialogue on youth, children and urban governance, to be held during the 2004 World Urban Forum;

(g) The World Bank, with the participation of UN-Habitat, held a youth, development and peace conference as part of the new World Bank strategy on youth and children. Joint activities in Kenya are under consideration.

30. The Cities Alliance was launched in 1999, with initial support from the World Bank and UN-Habitat, the political heads of the four leading global associations of local authorities and 10 Governments: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The Asian Development Bank joined the Cities Alliance in 2002 and UNEP and Brazil joined in 2003. UN-Habitat is active in the Cities Alliance at the policy level, as a member of the Consultative Group, and in the field, where its regional offices are instrumental. The Executive Director of UN-Habitat is a co-chair of the Cities Alliance, together with the World Bank's Vice President for Infrastructure.

31. The Consultative Group meets annually, and the 2003 meeting was held in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The Chairman of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat was invited to attend the meeting to provide the general views of member States. In addition, the Policy Advisory Board of the Cities Alliance gathers together eminent experts able to present the experience and needs of developing countries.

32. The Cities Alliance has mobilized over $60 million in grant funding since its inception, and Norway and Sweden recently increased their funding contribution, while Italy announced its intention to extend its non-core contribution for Latin America. Funds are used to support the preparation of pro-poor city development strategies and large-scale slum upgrading programmes, as operational extensions of the global campaigns on urban governance and secure tenure, respectively. Recent initiatives include the state-wide slum upgrading programme in Bahia, Brazil. A proposal for a national slum upgrading programme in Morocco is expected.

33. An independent evaluation of the Cities Alliance undertaken in 2002 praised the Alliance's achievements, in particular those of placing the issue of urban poverty and slums on the international agenda and improving collaboration among its members, including that between UN-Habitat and the World Bank. The shared activities of the two organizations in the Cities Alliance have contributed significantly to improved collaboration between the two, for example, the active participation of the World Bank in the first session of the World Urban Forum, and the representation of UN-Habitat at the Urban Research Symposium hosted by the World Bank in December 2002 and again in December 2003. The two agencies are collaborating closely in the Millennium Task Force on slums and on an increasing number of operational activities. Notable areas of collaboration have included the activities undertaken in various countries, such as Brazil, Madagascar, Nigeria, the Philippines and Viet Nam. UN-Habitat has seconded a senior manager to the World Bank to strengthen the capacity of the Cities Alliance secretariat and to manage and expand its urban upgrading portfolio.

34. The theme of the second World Urban Forum is "Cities: crossroads of cultures, inclusiveness and integration". There are two main types of events at the Forum: dialogues and networking events. The networking events are geared towards a smaller and more specialized audience. The dialogues are designed to promote an exchange of views among a broad spectrum of participants.

D. Coordination

35. UN-Habitat is participating in the United Nations Development Group at various levels. The Executive Director of UN-Habitat participates in the heads of agency meetings of the Group, while other staff members participate in its support group, programme group and other relevant meetings. This has improved collaboration with other United Nations agencies, programmes and funds and with country teams in regard to the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium[7] and the relevant goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration.

36. The Millennium Development Goals have been integrated into new guidelines for the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and linkages between common country assessment and UNDAF, the Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction strategy papers have been clarified. This gives more visibility to human settlements issues, with particular reference to the Millennium target of significantly improving the lives of at least 100 slum-dwellers by 2020 and to the challenge of meeting at least half of the rapidly growing urban demand for safe drinking water and adequate sanitation by 2015.

37. In line with the memorandum of understanding signed with UNDP in September 2002, UN-Habitat has started to assign Habitat programme managers to selected UNDP country offices. This initiative ensures a better coordination of UN-Habitat programmes with the priorities of national Governments and assists the resident coordinator system by providing both national and international expertise on shelter, sustainable human settlements and urban poverty in connection with the common country assessment and UNDAF processes. By the end of 2004, 33 programme managers are expected to be in place.

E. Disaster mitigation and rehabilitation

38. UN-Habitat is mandated, through the Habitat Agenda, to take the lead in disaster mitigation and rehabilitation with regard to human settlements. This mandate is being implemented through its Disaster Management Programme, which provides support to governments, local authorities and communities in strengthening their capacity to manage natural and man-made disasters. The long experience of UN-Habitat in pre-, mid- and post-disaster planning and implementation proves that, in many post-disaster scenarios, it is most effective when interventions are designed to begin simultaneously (i.e., consideration of the long-term impact of short-term humanitarian interventions can add value to the latter and depth to the former). In support of UN-Habitat activities in the emergency response and humanitarian areas, the Executive Director in early 2004 was invited to represent the Programme in the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs, and actively participates in its meetings.

39. In close collaboration with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), UN-Habitat projects in Kosovo continued to be implemented in three key areas: the rehabilitation of the municipal administration; the development of new spatial planning legislation; and the restoration of property and land registries. The Kosovo programme also includes the training of local government officials, in collaboration with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union. A new governance and development planning programme was formulated and its implementation begun in early 2004. UN-Habitat has also been working more broadly in the region; the objectives of the Settlement and Integration of Refugees Programme in Serbia are to develop local and republic-wide capacities for dealing with refugee integration and improving living conditions for refugees through the promotion of sustainable housing and social and economic integration. Further, UN-Habitat remains responsible for supporting the Housing and Property Directorate in Serbia and Montenegro. Building cross-border linkages is of crucial importance in reducing ethnic tensions and making progress towards long-term peace and stability in the region. In this regard, project identification was undertaken in 2003 in southern Serbia and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to strengthen local capacities in undertaking strategic urban development planning at the municipal level. In Croatia, UN-Habitat had formulated by the end of 2003 a project on strengthening the capacity of local governments in the fields of administration and development.

40. UN-Habitat, in collaboration with the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, held a regional consultation on local management and disaster reduction in the Caribbean region in September 2002, with participants from eight Central American and Caribbean States. The main objective of the consultation was to develop a harmonized regional disaster mitigation and management capacity for local governments at the municipal level. By December 2003, the final document had been produced and recommendations prepared in collaboration with UN-Habitat Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. The identification of potential donors and fund-raising activities have been undertaken in 2004. The formulated methodology and strategy for regional consultations, based on the success of the Cuban experience, was introduced in Mozambique in March 2003, during the first mission carried out under the Disaster

Management Programme. The objective is to develop a programme for technical support and cooperation with municipalities in the formulation of disaster reduction plans as part of overall municipal management. The process is ongoing, and it is anticipated that the Disaster Management Programme will replicate the local consultation among the selected municipalities in Mozambique in the biennium 2004-2005, subject to funding availability. In the same biennium, the strategy will be applied in seven small island developing States in collaboration with the Global Environment Facility and UNDP, with the primary objective of reducing the vulnerability of local communities to climate change hazards by improving the skills of municipal authorities and local organizations in disaster management.

41. The rehabilitation of roads in southern Sudan has continued, with the goal of ensuring the delivery of humanitarian supplies to local communities and their increased self-reliance through improved transportation and exchange of goods and services. UN-Habitat continues to be actively involved in supporting the United Nations and World Bank-led joint assessment missions in Sudan. In Liberia, UN-Habitat prepared input for the consolidated appeal process in two selected sectors: protection of the land and property rights of displaced populations and establishment of a reconstruction strategy for the country. In Somalia, the UN-Habitat Disaster Management Programme provides ongoing support to field programmes, in particular in such important areas as the sensitizing and training of trainers in regard to gender mainstreaming in post-conflict local governance. In other gender-related activities, UN-Habitat and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction office in Kenya conducted in late 2003 a regional gender and disaster management review of gender and disaster management policy in Africa. The review is part of the broader aim of the Strategy and UN-Habitat to bring a greater focus to gender issues in all disaster management activities. The draft report and recommendations were released at the end of December 2003.

42. In 2004, after the tragic earthquake in Bam, Islamic Republic of Iran, UN-Habitat undertook an assessment mission and prepared a proposal for the provision of intermediate shelter as a component of permanent shelter reconstruction, with a special focus on earthquake-resistant construction methods, community consultation and capacity-building. The proposal is currently under review by the UNDP office in Tehran. In late 2003, the Interdepartmental Framework for Coordination formulated a strategy for building national capacity for conflict prevention in Ghana. The Framework team contacted several United Nations agencies, calling for interest and availability in furthering the proposed medium-term activities. In response to the request UN-Habitat undertook an identification mission to Ghana in March 2004, and has prepared a proposal addressing pertinent issues, such as land administration, good governance and economic revitalization through the generation of new livelihood activities, as part of a strategy to ensure continued stability in Ghana. UN-Habitat also participated in the United Nations multidisciplinary assessment mission sent to Haiti to assess the humanitarian and development needs of the country, and proposed short-, medium- and long-term response actions. The mission developed a strategy for the involvement of UN-Habitat in the implementation of response projects in the country and prepared a proposal on preparatory assistance for vulnerable urban communities and local governments. UN-Habitat remains active in the ongoing consultations and in the meetings held with donors and other support agencies in this regard.

43. The development of user-friendly tools for disaster reduction, and for emergency aid and reconstruction in post-conflict situations, has continued. In particular, the first stage of a series on gender in post-conflict situations has been completed, and a comprehensive tool for addressing land and property administration in post-conflict situations will be launched in September 2004. The development, in collaboration with UNDP and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, of a web-based registry of disaster reduction tools and norms will continue until the end of 2004.

44. The multisectoral and interdisciplinary nature of disaster reduction and response requires continuous interaction, cooperation and partnerships among related institutions in order to achieve global objectives of disaster mitigation and sustainable post-crisis rehabilitation. UN-Habitat continues to facilitate partnerships in disaster management and to support the establishment of a dialogue among United Nations agencies, the donor community, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Memorandums of understanding were signed in May 2003 with the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and in November 2003 with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. As a critical element of the implementation of the latter, a UN-Habitat surge facility was established in 2003 to enable UN-Habitat to deploy short-term relief assistance missions in support of sister agencies and the Governments of affected countries. UN-Habitat continues to support the efforts of the Strategy within the context of the inter-agency task force, in particular by coordinating a substantive consultation on urban risk as input to the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, to be held in Kobe, Japan, in January 2005.

F. The twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

45. At its twelfth session, the Commission on Sustainable Development reviewed the implementation of Agenda 21,[8] the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21[9] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation")[10] focusing on the thematic cluster for 2004-2005: water, sanitation and human settlements.

46. UN-Habitat worked very closely with the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the regional commissions and other agencies and organizations in the preparations for the twelfth session of the Commission.

47. UN-Habitat collaborated with the Secretariat in the preparation of the Secretary-General's report on human settlements and other background documents, including the outline of national reports on human settlements.

48. UN-Habitat organized three side events on the themes "Empowerment of urban youth: challenges and opportunities for youth partnerships", "Access to basic services" (convened jointly with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research) and "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals on water and sanitation: unheard voices of women". The latter was appreciated by many delegations in the plenary sessions and recognized as an innovative event that provided an opportunity for young women to express their views.

49. UN-Habitat organized a learning centre event on urban governance tools to support sustainable urbanization. The three-hour session was attended by representatives of local and national governments, civil society organizations, international non-governmental organizations, development practitioners and academia. The session served to showcase key tools of the Global Campaign on Urban Governance, including the urban governance index, the transparency toolkit and the participatory budgeting toolkit.

50. The Commission at its twelfth session raised several important issues related to water and sanitation in the context of human settlements. Noting that cities and towns would absorb 95 per cent of the world's expected population growth, it was noted that rapid urbanization would increase poverty and the feminization of poverty in cities, and that women would pay a heavy price in procuring water for their families through daily drudgery and lost opportunities. It was suggested that UNDAF and the World Bank's poverty reduction strategy papers should assign priority to water and sanitation and slum upgrading. Discussions in the sessions and panels reflected that the financing of water, sanitation and slum upgrading required a close partnership between the United Nations system and the international financing institutions to supplement domestic resources.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

51. **Multilateral and bilateral assistance for housing and urban infrastructure amounts to roughly US$ 4 billion annually, including US$ 3 billion in loans from multilateral development banks (mainly for transport and water infrastructure) and US$ 400 million in technical assistance. These resources have not increased in recent years and play only a limited supporting role in view of the magnitude of the needs in terms of housing and basic services in developing countries.**

52. **A number of Governments have included shelter and urbanization issues in their national development strategies. The link between sustainable urbanization policies and poverty reduction strategies remains to be clarified and strengthened in many developing countries. Increased international cooperation is required in this area.**

53. **While major gains have been registered during the period 2000-2003 in implementing the United Nations Human Settlements Programme by engaging Habitat Agenda partners, human and financial resource constraints have limited the achievement of better results in partnership activities. There is a realization that promoting active participation in such international and intergovernmental forums as the World Urban Forum and the Governing Council of UN-Habitat is as important as the system-wide and continuous engagement of the Habitat Agenda partners. This two-pronged approach needs to be continued.**

54. **Governments are encouraged to include water, sanitation and human settlements in their national development plans and to integrate urban poverty in national poverty reduction strategy documents.**

55. **Governments in a position to do so are encouraged to increase the non-earmarked component of their contribution in order to facilitate the**

implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium and the relevant commitments of the Millennium Declaration, in particular the commitment to achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

56. Governments and financial institutions are encouraged to contribute generously to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund and the Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian people to enable UN-Habitat to assist in resolving the long-term deterioration in human settlement conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and in fully realizing the objectives of the Programme.

57. Governments and international agencies are encouraged to review and promote the role of cities in sustainable development as the engines of economic growth and to assess their social risk and opportunity, as well as their potential assets in relation to rural hinterlands.

58. Governments are encouraged to support the participation of partner groups from developing countries at the World Urban Forum, to be held in Barcelona, Spain, in 2004.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 8* (A/58/8), annex I.

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution I, annex II.

[3] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.III.B.1.

[4] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.III.Q.1.

[5] See General Assembly resolution 55/20.

[6] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.IV.7.

[7] General Assembly resolution S-25/2, annex.

[8] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[9] General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex.

[10] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.